

HOW HEALTH CARE COVERAGE WILL CHANGE UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The wide-ranging overhaul of the U.S. health care system known as the Affordable Care Act is expected to touch the lives of most Americans in some fashion. Here are examples of health care consumers who could see benefits and drawbacks under the law:

Person	Single man, 28, employed full time 	Single woman, 34, with a pre-existing medical condition 	Single man, 40, employed part time 	Family of four; mother, 44, employed full time with health benefits 	Family of three; father, 51, owns a small business 
Job and income	Information technology worker for small startup Earns \$30,000 a year, more than twice the federal poverty level (FPL) for a 1-person household  100% of federal poverty level	Freelance graphic designer Earns \$48,000 a year, more than four times the FPL for a 1-person household 	Handyman Earns \$13,000 a year, just over the FPL for a 1-person household 	Human resources officer for large firm Earns \$85,000 a year, 3.6 times the FPL for a 4-person household 	Restaurateur with 24 full-time employees Earns \$90,000 a year, more than four times the FPL for a 3-person household 
Currently insured?	☐ YES ☒ NO Employer does not offer insurance; he is mulling whether to purchase it. He has not seen a doctor since aging out of his parents' policy at age 26.	☐ YES ☒ NO Denied insurance due to pre-existing bipolar disorder requiring medications. She pays cash for medical care and drugs.	☐ YES ☒ NO Employer does not provide health benefits to part-time workers. He forgoes preventive care and visits a local emergency room when necessary.	☒ YES ☐ NO Has a generous coverage plan through employer with low deductibles and out-of-pocket costs. The family has a wide range of doctors and specialists from which to choose for care.	☒ YES ☐ NO Covers family through individual policy; does not provide coverage to workers. The family visits doctors in the plan's network for care.
Eligible for subsidized coverage based on income?	☒ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☒ NO	☒ YES ☐ NO	☒ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☒ NO
Other benefits under the health overhaul law	He could opt to buy a low-cost, high-deductible catastrophic policy available to those under 30 but would not get a premium subsidy for such a policy.	She cannot be denied coverage or charged a higher premium based on her condition or her gender. She will also have a cap on out-of-pocket expenses and no lifetime coverage limit. Mental health care and prescription drugs are included in the core benefits of marketplace-based plans.	He is eligible for Medicaid, which has expanded in many states for individuals making up to \$15,400. Medicaid for new enrollees will offer core coverage including free preventive care.	Can keep existing health plan, provided her employer continues to offer it. The plan must offer free preventive services, allow children under 26 to remain on the plan and cap out-of-pocket costs.	Because he has fewer than 25 full-time employees, he is eligible for a tax credit of up to 50 percent of his contribution toward workers' health insurance premiums if he covers at least 50 percent of the total premium cost when buying through an exchange. His child could stay on his coverage until age 26.
Drawbacks under the health overhaul law	He will be fined for not carrying health insurance: beginning in 2014, 1 percent of his income, eventually growing to 2.5 percent of income or \$695, whichever is greater. As a young, healthy person, he may wind up paying relatively more for a premium, since he will be helping defray costs for older and sicker consumers who cannot be charged more based on health status.	She makes more than 4 times the federal poverty level for an individual, which means she is not eligible for a government subsidy to lower premium prices. She is required to carry health insurance or pay a penalty, but she would be exempted if the lowest cost coverage available to her exceeded 8 percent of her income, \$3,840 a year.	If his state doesn't expand Medicaid, he may not be able to afford private insurance through a new marketplace, which, given his income, should not exceed 2 percent of his annual income, \$240 a year. If his income drops below \$11,490 — the federal poverty level for an individual — he will not be eligible for a premium subsidy, due to a quirk in the law.	Considered a "Cadillac Plan" under the law (a plan valued at more than \$10,200 for an individual or \$27,500 for a family), a tax of 40% will be levied on the value of the plan exceeding those amounts, payable by the insurer. This could lead the insurer to modify the plan, drop it or pass the tax on to the worker through higher premiums, deductibles or copays. The tax will be assessed beginning in 2018.	Even with the tax credit, the cost of providing health insurance may be more than he can afford. If he expands his business to employ more than 50 full-time employees, he will be required to provide health insurance or face a fine of up to \$2,000 for each employee after the first 30. He could also be fined if he chooses a plan that is not considered comprehensive or affordable. Businesses will not have to comply with this provision of the law until 2015.